

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000549

OUTCOME: 4 - Individual Health Benefits

Topic: Medicare Compacts

Type of Question: Hansard Page 58, 29 May 2017

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

Senator WATT: What about the college? Did you meet with the college together with the minister about the agreement?

Ms Jolly: I think we would need to take on notice some of those questions. There were obviously a lot of discussions over the period and things went backwards and forwards from the office. Several of us were involved at various times in working with the office on elements of the documents that you have. You will see that they cover a broad range of issues across health, so we would need to check to make sure we were giving you accurate information. There was not a single person involved, but there were obviously a lot of issues covered. Any attempt to give you a sense of exactly how that played out would not give you the full picture.

Senator WATT: Sure. Again, I am happy for you to take on notice to give me some precise numbers of meetings.

Ms Jolly: Sure.

Senator WATT: In general terms, do you know whether the department at any point met with the College of GPs about the compact, the agreement?

Ms Jolly: I meet with the AMA frequently. I meet with the College of GPs frequently on a variety of issues throughout the period. There would be other people in my division. We run the Medicare division. That would be dealing with both of those organisations.

Similarly, there are issues of workforce in some of these documents. There are issues of My Health Record. A lot of those parts of the departments would also have been having conversations. I guess that is why I am keen to make sure we have given you a full picture rather than indicate a particular set of means.

Senator WATT: Sure. Let's confine it to you then. You are the first assistant secretary in charge of this area. In the various meetings that you have with the AMA, have you discussed the shared vision with them?

Ms Jolly: At points there would have been discussions about that amongst other things, yes.

Senator WATT: In the meetings you have attended with the college, the agreement struck with them has been discussed?

Ms Jolly: Yes.

Senator WATT: Okay. And you will take on notice the number of times the minister has met with the college as well as the AMA.

Ms Jolly: The secretary has indicated we will do that.

Answer:

The Department of Health met with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners once and the Australian Medical Association once, where the compacts were the primary reason for discussion. As noted in Hansard, the Department meets with both stakeholders frequently on a variety of issues.

The Department does not have visibility of the Ministers diary.